

REMARKS

Entry of this amendment, and reconsideration and allowance of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

This amendment is in response to the Advisory Action dated September 11, 2003 and the Final Office Action dated April 21, 2003. Appreciation is expressed to the Examiner for the allowance of claims 12-16 and 20-26 as well as for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2-5, 10 and 11.

By the present amendment, rejected claims 1, 6-9 and 17-19 have been cancelled, without prejudice, thereby removing all issues regarding these claims, also, each of claims 2, 4, and 10 have been redrafted into independent form to place them in condition for allowance in light of the indication on page 3 of the Office Action that claims 2-5, 10 and 11 would be allowed if this step were taken. Accordingly, entry of this amendment and allowance of claims 2-5, 10 and 11, together with allowed claims 12-16 and 20-26, is respectfully requested.


Entry of this amendment is requested, notwithstanding the finality of the Office Action. Under the provisions of 37 CFR § 1.116, amendments made to comply with requirements of form set forth in a previous Office Action are permitted entry even after final rejection. Similarly, amendments for placing a case in better condition for appeal are permitted. In the present instance, the amending of claims 2, 4, and 10 into independent form corresponds to the suggestion made on page 3 of the second paragraph of the Office Action to place these claims in condition for allowance. With regard to this, it is noted that this amendment should not require any further search or substantial consideration on the part of the Examiner since these changes essentially correspond to the suggestions made in the Office Action.

If the Examiner believes that there are any other points which may be clarified or otherwise disposed of either by telephone discussion or by personal interview, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case No. 500.40674X00), and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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